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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

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EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE
WINTHROP, IOWA

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON SUMMER BIRDS OF IOWA IN 1939

By ROBERT B. WALLACE
AMES, IOWA

During the summer months of 1939, Charles Yocom and the writer engaged in a farmer opinion survey, traveled over most of the counties in the eastern two-thirds of the state, as well as some of the western counties in the two northern tiers. In each county approximately an hour was spent observing birds in one or more of the woodlands, and in addition many casual observations were made in driving along the country roads or in stopping to talk with farmers in the fields. In all, 114 species were seen in 55 counties between the middle of June and late August.

In only a few counties were observations made in lake, slough or deeply-wooded areas, so that for the most part the study was of the birds of the fields and lightly-wooded areas.

Resulting from the summer's observations, the following notes on various species of birds may be of interest to students of Iowa bird life.

ANNOTATED LIST

American Egret. From July 25 on, this species was seen in several of the counties in the eastern part of the state. With increasing numbers of this species in southern United States it is not surprising that yearly more of them should be seen in Iowa in late summer. No more than two were seen at any one time.

Greater Prairie Chicken. On August 16 in the extensive fields southwest of Algona in Kossuth County the writer saw Prairie Chickens in three places. In one place there were six and in another three along with some pheasants and European Partridges. In the third locality a mother bird with 12 young walked across the road in front of the writer's car and flew over the fence into the nearby mown hay-field where they were observed through binoculars for some time. The species was not noted in any other county.

Upland Plover. This species was found to be common in many localities in southern Iowa, where it was apparently nesting in the grassy fields in areas of cultivation.

Shore Birds. Small flocks of various species of shore birds, probably composed of non-breeding individuals to a certain extent, were seen as early as July. The Pectoral Sandpiper was first seen on July 6, which would seem to indicate that it might be expected to be present in Iowa at any time between spring and fall though never breeding in the state. In northern Iowa in late August there were few roadside sloughs or ponds examined which were without shore birds. Of these the Pectoral Sandpiper was the most often seen. Solitary Sandpipers appeared to be second in abundance with Greater Yellow-legs third.

Forster's Tern. The writer found this tern abundant at a small lake near Dolliver, Emmet County, August 17. Many were flying to and fro or fishing with the numerous Black Terns. Their presence in such numbers in this locality may have indicated breeding, but in view of the lateness of the season they more likely represented a transitory influx from breeding ranges in Minnesota. DuMont (1933) lists no Iowa breeding records, but suggests that the species may yet be discovered breeding in the northwestern part of the state. The species was observed nowhere else in the state during the summer.

Northern Flicker. A rough indication from county to county was kept of the numbers of Flickers seen each day. There was an average of 3.5 Flickers seen daily in the southernmost tier of counties, 3.5 in the middle tier of counties—(the tier running through Story County)

and 18.6 in the two northernmost tiers of counties. In the south there appeared to be a slight increase in numbers along the Mississippi River, and in the northern part of the state numbers were materially greater toward the west.

Swallows. Although DuMont (1933) gives the Barn, Bank, and Rough-winged Swallows an equal status in Iowa as common summer residents, the present study indicated their order of abundance to be as listed respectively above. The Barn Swallow was found to be one of the most omnipresent of birds, a few pairs seemingly breeding on almost every farm. The Bank Swallow was found in about half of the counties over the state. The Rough-winged Swallow, on the other hand, seemed to be more localized in distribution and considerably less common. The Cliff Swallow was even less common, being found only in Palo Alto, Sioux and Tama Counties. On August 1 in Dubuque County, the only Tree Swallows seen during the summer were observed with a large number of other species of swallows.

Mockingbird. DuMont (1933) calls the Mockingbird "an uncommon and irregular summer resident in the southern third of the state." Although Yocom found it as far north as Chickasaw County, in general the present study found the species limited to the three southern tiers of counties, and in this region it was not especially uncommon. Individuals were seen as follows: two in the southern part of Van Buren County; one a mile northeast of Fairfield, Jefferson County; three in different localities near Salem, Henry County; pair observed building a nest in a roadside shrub three miles southeast of Yarmouth, Des Moines County; one near East Peru, Madison County (the owner of the land on which the bird was seen said that Mockingbirds had nested in the locality for three seasons); one in Liberty Township along Highway 206, Warren County; single birds near Melcher and Attica, Marion County; nesting pair on a farm near Cedar, Mahaska County; pair near Crawfordsville, Washington County; individuals in three localities around Logan, Harrison County; one seen along highway northeast of Cascade, Dubuque County; one seen near Bassett, Chickasaw County.

Starling. The invasion of this species in the state seems to be complete. It did not appear to be noticeably more common in the eastern part of the state than farther west.

Yellow-throated Vireo. One bird was seen in Maquoketa State Park, Jackson County, on July 26.

Yellow-breasted Chat. In Wayne County, June 20, one individual was observed for some time as it was singing.

Eastern and Western Meadowlark. After the middle of the summer the Meadowlarks did little singing and no attempt was made to distinguish the species by sight. Before the middle of the summer the western species was found over to the Mississippi River in more or less localized areas. Often the two species were found in the same county, but not once during the summer were both species heard singing in the same field. Undoubtedly, with extensive observation both species will be found in all the counties of the state.

Orchard Oriole. This oriole was seen in a number of places in southern Iowa, although never very commonly. In northwestern Iowa they seemed to have much the same status, but were seen only rarely over the rest of the state.

Dickcissel. In most of the localities of the state which were visited the Dickcissel was one of the most abundant birds, but it was found to be comparatively uncommon in the east-central counties.

LITERATURE CITED

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NESTING OF THE GREAT BLUE HERON IN POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY

By BRUCE F. STILES

State Conservation Officer
Council Bluffs, Iowa

For many years there has been a breeding colony of Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias herodias*) in the Gifford estate south of Council Bluffs, in Lewis Township, Pottawattamie County, Iowa. The birds nest in the tops of tall cottonwoods, 60 to 80 feet from the ground. The nests are bulky affairs made of sticks and are used from year to year, after being added to and improved. First-season nests are much smaller than old nests.

Philip A. DuMont, in 'A Revised List of the Birds of Iowa' (1933) lists the Great Blue Heron as a rare breeder but generally a summer resident. He mentions this colony near Council Bluffs.

It may be that this colony is not made up entirely of Great Blue Herons. From my observations, some individuals appear larger and lighter colored. They may be Ward's Herons (*Ardea herodias wardi*). This could only be determined definitely by the collection of a specimen.

In 1939 the herons arrived on March 20. During the next few days their numbers increased to nearly 200 individuals. The nests were built in flimsy little branches at the extreme tops of the trees, and in no place could I find adjacent or higher limbs of sufficient strength to allow me to climb to a position above. For this reason I was unable to tell the exact date on which the first eggs were laid or hatched. On April 17 I found parts of two heron eggs on the ground under a nest, which from their appearance seemed to be egg shells from which young had recently hatched. I am under the impression that the incubation period of Great Blue Herons is nearly four weeks, and if this is true, egg-laying must have started almost immediately upon their arrival. If that is the case, mating and breeding must have taken place during or before their northern migration. At this time there were 88 nests in use in the colony. This is not a large colony as Great Blue Heron colonies go. E. L. Moseley, in 'Wilson Bulletin' for March, 1936, tells of a colony near Fremont, in Sandusky County, Ohio, in which 1,118 nests were counted.

By June 10, nearly adult young were visible in the nests, and at this time the colony was a place of great excitement and activity. The ground was strewn with a litter of egg shells, fish, frogs, feathers and excrement. The birds paid little attention to an intruder and the air was filled with the sound of wings, cries of the birds and rustle of the branches.

As the colony is located only a mile from Lake Manawa, in which game fish are stocked rather extensively, I was anxious to determine to what extent the birds preyed on these species. On June 24 I collected several pounds of fish remains and skeletons from the ground under the nests and sent them to W. W. Aitken, our State Biologist, for identification. A preliminary report received from Mr. Aitken on July 5 did not reveal the presence of any game fish. He reported that the majority of the bones were from carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) and gar (*Lepisosteus* subspecies). Whether or not his final report reveals the presence of game fish, his preliminary report definitely establishes the fact that at this colony at least, game fish were not commonly taken. While I did not find the remains of any rodents, I frequently saw herons alight in adjacent fields, which leads me to believe that to some extent they fed on other than aquatic forms of life.

By July 18 most of the young had left the nests, and from then on through the summer they were common on the nearby lakes and river.



NESTING OF GREAT BLUE HERONS

The left photograph was taken in the spring before the leaves were out and shows the nests of the colony in Polkavattinnic County. In the middle photograph the eggs of the Great Blue Heron are compared with the smaller eggs of the Black-crowned Night Heron. At the right is shown a Great Blue Heron nest that had been blown down into the top of a lower tree by a severe storm. Photographs by Bruce F. Stiles.

Great Blue Herons were abundant in October, and there were still a few at Lake Manawa as late as November 5, on which date I saw five individuals. On December 11 I saw one individual on the Carr Lake Refuge in Pottawattamie County.

To my surprise I noticed Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli*) nesting among the Great Blue Herons on July 17. As their nesting was confined to the extreme western edge of the colony, I had not noticed them previously. When they arrived I do not know, but they must not have been present on April 19, for at that time I made a count of the Great Blue Heron nests, and surely I should have seen them had they been present.

It would be interesting to know if Ward's Heron nests here. However, the Department of Conservation in Iowa does not issue scientific collecting permits to state conservation officers, and I am unable to settle this question. According to DuMont, it has nested in Henry County, Iowa, an adult male having been taken by Walter G. Savage on April 2, 1899. This specimen is now in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

THE DUBUQUE CONVENTION

By WALTER M. ROSENE

Sec'y-Treasurer, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

The eighteenth annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union was held at Dubuque, Iowa, Saturday and Sunday, May 11 and 12, 1940. It is regretted that the minutes of the meeting as recorded by the former Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Kate LaMar, were lost in the transfer of books and papers to the new Secretary, and that it is necessary to give the Saturday program in the following abbreviated form.

Morning Session

- 8:45. Registration at Hotel Julien, where sessions were held.
- 9:45. Opening session. In the absence of President O. S. Thomas, Vice-President Ethan Hemsley presided.
- 9:50. "Welcome." Mrs. R. W. Johnson, President of Dubuque Bird Club.
- 9:55. "Dubuqueland." Miss Margaret Kohlman, Dubuque.
- 10:05. "Birds as an Item of Food in the Diet of the Spotted Skunk." Wilfred D. Crabb, Research Graduate Assistant in Wildlife, Iowa State College, Ames.
- 10:15. "The Ruffed Grouse in Its Iowa Habitat." E. B. Polderboer, State Park Naturalist.
- 10:30. "Farm Conservation Practises and Birds." Dr. G. O. Hendrickson, Iowa State College, Ames.
- 10:45. "Trials of a Bird-bander's Wife." Mrs. M. L. Jones, Des Moines.
- 11:00. "Activities of the Junior Audubon Club." Miss Margaret Murley, Sumner.
- 11:10. "Bird Portraits in Oil." E. W. Steffen, Cedar Rapids. (This was illustrated with Mr. Steffen's large series of paintings.)
- 11:45. Luncheon.

Afternoon Session

- 1:30. "A Bibliography of Iowa Birds." W. W. Aitken, Spirit Lake. (This number was omitted because of Mr. Aitken's absence.)
- 1:40. "Burrowing Owl Food Habits." Thos. G. Scott, U. S. Biological Survey Representative in Cooperative Research, Iowa State College, Ames.
- 2:00. "Relation of Egg Size to the Period of Incubation." Dr. Warren N. Keck, Coe College, Cedar Rapids.

2:20. "Origin of the Common Names of Birds." Dr. Martin L. Grant, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls.

2:35. "Upper Mississippi Wildlife Refuge." Supt. Ray C. Steele, Winona, Minnesota.

3:05. "The Winter Range of the Magpie, Tufted Titmouse, the Kinglets, the Meadowlarks, Common Redpoll and Snow Bunting; Round Table Discussion." Led by Dr. F. L. R. Roberts, Spirit Lake.

4:00. Business meeting. The Nominating Committee presented the names of officers for the ensuing year (as given on the title page of this issue) and they were unanimously elected.

The annual Ornithologists' Banquet was held in the hotel Saturday evening. It was attended by over 100 persons and was a very enjoyable affair. The toastmaster was Dr. W. J. Baumgartner, who introduced and questioned various Iowa Ornithologists' Union "notables" in an "Information Squeeze" program which was novel and full of humor. The University of Dubuque quartet, composed of Warren and Floyd Rundle, Donald Boyd, Gerald Smith and accompanied by Mrs. F. Di Tella, sang several appropriate songs, and Ed Volkert, "the Sage of Massey", recited several original poems. The speaker of the evening was Dr. W. B. Bell, Chief of Division of Wildlife Research, Bureau of Biological Survey, Washington, D. C. His address was on "The Progress of Wildlife Conservation," and it was illustrated by several very interesting reels of colored moving pictures from the files of the Biological Survey.

The field trips began at 5:00 and 6:00 a. m., Sunday, May 12, and the members were divided into three groups, which upon the return met at Eagle Point Park at 12:30 p. m. A fine luncheon was served by the Dubuque Bird Club in the park dining room. After luncheon M. L. Jones gave a talk on the work of the Park Naturalists in Iowa parks, and a short business session was held. A motion was made and seconded that we hold our 1941 convention on the days of Saturday and Sunday as in 1940. Another motion commended the U. S. Biological Survey on their stand against baiting and the use of live decoys in duck hunting. The members were urged to write their senators and congressmen about this matter. Dr. Hendrickson presented the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted and passed: "Resolved, That the Iowa Ornithologists' Union commend the Iowa State Conservation Commission in co-operation with the Works Progress Administration and Iowa State College in the employment of Park Naturalists in furtherance of nature education in state parks."

The report of the Resolutions Committee, composed of E. B. Polderboer, Mrs. G. O. Hendrickson and Miss Marv Young, was read and adopted, as follows: "In behalf of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union the Resolutions Committee wishes to express its appreciation to the Program Committee for its efficient work in arranging for such a fine staff of speakers; to the Dubuque Bird Club for extending the invitation to meet in Dubuque, and for making very complete arrangements for the field trips; to the U. S. Biological Survey for its co-operation in furnishing speakers, films and boat transportation for the bird hikes; to the management of the Julien Hotel for the privilege of using its facilities for the program. Congratulations are extended to Iowa State College and its staff members who are doing such fine work in the field of wildlife conservation. The Resolutions Committee regrets to report the death within the past year of the following members of this organization: Miss Winifred Gilbert of Cedar Falls, Mrs. Walter Rosene of Ogden, and Mrs. W. M. Woodward of Independence."

The meeting was adjourned and final farewells were taken of all old friends until next year.

Attendance Register.—AMES, Ivan Boyd, Wilfred Crabb, Dr. and Mrs. G. O. Hendrickson, Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Scott; CEDAR FALLS, Mrs. Ray Dix, Mrs. B. W. Eiler, Dr. and Mrs. M. L. Grant; CEDAR

RAPIDS, Esther Copp, Lavina Dragoo, Mrs. C. C. Flodin, Dr. W. N. Keck, Lillian Serbousek, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Steffen, Iola Tillapaugh, Myra Willis, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Wodrich; COUNCIL BLUFFS, Bruce Stiles; DES MOINES, F. H. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Kinnaird, Kate LaMar, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Tonkin, Frieda Troeger, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg; DUBUQUE, Fern Andrews, Dr. H. Atchison, Dr. and Mrs. W. J. Baumgartner, Donald Boyd, Lyle Bradley, Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Cline, Elsie Datisman, Harold Davis, Bob Degendorf, Mrs. F. DiTella, Kay Dewey, Gerald Everly, Myrtle Faldorf, Elaine Green, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Hemsley, Jas. Hemsley, Henry Herrmann, Rosalie Herrmann, Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Heuser, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hoffman, Karol Hok, Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Johnson, Dorothy Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Johnson, Helen Kintzinger, Margaret Kohman, Paul Kort, Harley Lawrence, Clara Lemon, Jerry Lenko, Carl Leuthold, Eleanor Little, Mr. and Mrs. Neil Lutes, Amy Masters, Robt. McComish, Mary McDonald, Gertrude Merritt, Mrs. Margaret Milversted, Frances Osthoff, Horace Poole, John Poole, Woodrow Radle, David Reed, Elizabeth Reu, Margaret Reu, Robt. Richards, Rose Marie Richards, Mrs. Jessie Richardson, Joanne Robinson, Floyd Rundle, Warren Rundle, Ival Schuster, Gerald Smith, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Smith, Mrs. C. B. Trewin, Jack Tupper, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Volkert, Edna Walter, Mrs. Ira Whitney, Dr. Robt. Wilson, Mary H. Young, Martha Zehetner; DYERSVILLE, Edith Ham; ELKADER, Mrs. Prentice; FAIRFIELD, J. W. Dole; HAMPTON, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Lambert; INDEPENDENCE, Ruth Funk, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Holgate; IOWA CITY, Malcolm McDonald; JEFFERSON, E. R. Peterson; NEW HARTFORD, Emmett Polderboer; OGDEN, Walter Rosen; POSTVILLE, A. J. Palas; SPIRIT LAKE, Dr. and Mrs. F. L. R. Roberts; SUMNER, Margaret Murley; WATERLOO, Lola Barnhart, Mae Clouse, Salina Hantelmann, Russell Hays, Lucile Loban, Myra Loban, Hilda Miller, Wanda Wilharm, Katherine Young; WINTHROP, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Pierce; WASHINGTON, D. C., Dr. W. B. Bell; WINONA, MINN., Ray C. Steele. Total registered, 133.

Birds Seen on the Field Trip.—Guttenberg and Twelve Mile Island, Clayton County. Dubuque vicinity, Sageville marshes, Durango, Zollicoffer's Lake and Massey Station, Dubuque County; May 12, 5:00 a. m. to 12:30 p. m. Weather warm and skies clear.

Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue and Green Herons, Am. Bittern, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Shoveller, Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Broad-winged and Marsh Hawks, Bob-white, Ring-necked Pheasant, King, Virginia and Sora Rails, Am. Coot, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Am. Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral, White-rumped and Least Sandpipers, Greater and Lesser Yellow-legs, Herring, Ring-billed and Bonaparte's Gulls, Black Tern, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned and Barred Owls, Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Flicker, Pileated, Red-bellied, Red-headed, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Kingbird, Phoebe, Alder, Least and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Wood Pewee, Prairie Horned Lark, Tree, Bank, Rough-winged and Barn Swallows, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House, Carolina, Prairie Marsh and Short-billed Marsh Wrens, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood, Olive-backed, Gray-cheeked and Willow Thrushes, Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Migrant Shrike, Starling, Bell's, Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Black and White, Prothonotary, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Tenn., Orange-crowned, Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Black-poll, Palm, Mourning, Wilson's and Canada Warblers, Oven-bird, Grinnell's and Louisiana Water-

thrushes, Northern Yellow-throat, Am. Redstart, Bobolink, Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds, Baltimore Oriole, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Goldfinch, Red-eyed Towhee, English, Savannah, Grasshopper, Vesper, Lark, Chipping, Field, Harris's, White-throated, Lincoln's, Swamp and Song Sparrows, Slate-colored Junco. Total, 145 species.

PRESIDENT KECK ADDRESSES THE MEMBERS

Dear Fellow Members:

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the honor of being elected your President. It is my hope that I may make myself worthy of your confidence. With your co-operation and loyalty our Union will continue to increase its usefulness.

Of the many educational and scientific meetings that I attend, I most enjoy our Iowa Ornithologists' Convention. One cannot help but sense the feeling of mutual interest and genuine companionship that permeates our group.

Birds have been the favorite subject for amateur observation and study. Because of their abundance, their almost infinite variety and their more than frequent beauty of form and color, they have an irresistible appeal. Their popularity in Iowa will never be seriously challenged if we continue to broaden our sphere of influence in regard to the best methods of conservation and protection. We should give encouragement to the various agencies promoting the preservation of bird life.

There are many avenues through which we may work and offer assistance to others in the study of birds. Some of our members are teachers, others are interested in various youth organizations, some are actively engaged in naturalist work, and still others are members of local bird clubs. Our combined efforts will continue to make young and old alike bird-conscious. I feel confident that our membership can be greatly increased. All members should invite interested persons to join our Union. With the additional income our Editor will be able to realize his desire to enlarge our magazine.

May I suggest a special project for the coming year? It is quite apparent that the influence of bird lovers in a community is much more effective if the individuals are organized into a local club. The activities of a group are recognized by the public while individual efforts are often unnoticed. Such groups act as focal points in each community. The recently organized Waterloo group has our hearty con-



DR. WARREN N. KECK

Our new President was born and educated in Iowa. His former home was at Keosauqua, Iowa. For the past four years he has been a member of the faculty of the College, Cedar Rapids.

gratulations. Perhaps the modest ambition of our Union to promote one club a year could be attained. Over a period of ten years, ten active bird clubs, in addition to those now in existence, would do much to foster bird study in Iowa. An "Extension" Committee might be appointed to advise, assist and help any group that might be interested in forming a local bird club.

I trust that all may have many happy experiences during the summer. Let us have faith that some of us will not have to put aside our field glasses and take up gun and sword before our next meeting.

Cordially yours,

WARREN N. KECK

GENERAL NOTES

Birds in Stone Park.—Wilfred D. Crabb published a list of birds observed in Stone Park, Sioux City ('Iowa Bird Life', March, 1939, pp. 12-13). Below I am giving a list of summer birds I saw in Stone Park during June, July and August, 1939, which supplements Mr. Crabb's list: Orchard Oriole, Purple Martin, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Barred Owl, Rough-winged Swallow, American Redstart, Eastern Yellow Warbler, Warbling Vireo, Eastern Phoebe, Bob-white, Ring-necked Pheasant.—BORDEN C. BUCHANAN, Sioux City, Iowa.

A Yellow-crowned Night Heron near Hudson.—On April 5, 1940, while my husband and I were exploring ponds in this vicinity, we drove down a secluded road beside which a small creek runs. Standing in the shallow water was a Yellow-crowned Night Heron. As we stopped near him (about 20 feet) he paid little attention, and while we looked at him through our glasses he apparently went back to sleep. We noted the white crown with only a trace of buff, white patches under the eyes, and a plume which resolved itself into more than one feather when the wind blew. The body was solid blue-gray with a heavy blue-black bill; the black of the head came well down on the back of his neck. After we had looked him over thoroughly, I got out of the car and walked toward him—whereupon he straightened up, eyed us severely, took two or three steps and paused uncertainly. I went back to the car and we left him. We saw the Virginia Rail at the same place last fall. It is a good place for observing water birds.—MRS. ROBT. I. BORDNER, Hudson, Iowa.

The Song of the Fox Sparrow.—T. Gilbert Pearson, in his book 'Birds of America', says the song of the Fox Sparrow is to be heard in the United States when the birds are foraging in little flocks, but even then altogether too infrequently; for many a bird-lover has never heard it at all.

On March 19, 1939, I was walking through a brushy hillside ravine, west of Sigourney, Iowa, when I heard many Fox Sparrows giving a grand concert. Their song sounded like a series of whistled notes very prettily slurred together like those of the warbling birds. At the height of their migration in April, I counted 25 Fox Sparrows that were visible at one time. At this time Song Sparrows, Cardinals and Towhees were all singing, but the numerous Fox Sparrows could be heard everywhere. They remained in this ravine until April 22.

In June I visited the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago, and as I walked into the building containing perching birds (where they have almost every live bird known in the United States), I was delighted to hear a song that I had heard many times in April—the song of the Fox Sparrow. He was the only bird in the whole building that was singing. He shared a cage with the Indigo Bunting and Hermit Thrush. He sang incessantly just as the ones sang in the wild state in the ravine at Sigourney.

On October 5, 1939, they came back to the ravine. By November 8, most of them had gone south, but on November 21 I saw two. That was the last record I had of them.—MRS. W. C. DE LONG, Sigourney, Iowa.

Kentucky Warbler, Carolina Wren and Duck Hawk in Allamakee County.—On May 16, 1940, Oscar Allert, Rev. M. C. Melcher and I went on a field trip in Allamakee County, Iowa, visiting the mouth of the Yellow River and the wooded Mississippi River bottomland between Harpers Ferry and Waukon Junction and south of the latter village. We covered the same country as on our trip of May 11, 1939, (mentioned in June, 1939, 'Iowa Bird Life', p. 28). Two Kentucky Warblers in full song were observed in the exact locality where we found the bird last year—along the railway track a quarter-mile south of Waukon Junction. A Carolina Wren also sang for us in his best style at this place. The pair of Duck Hawks were observed at the cliff where we found them last year (described by Allert in September, 1939, 'Iowa Bird Life', pp. 34-36). We decided that the nesting crevice high in the cliff was the same one in which we saw movements of the young in 1939. One of the adult Duck Hawks returned with a brownish-yellow object in its talons, but the distance was too great for us to identify it even with binoculars. It was evident that they were feeding young at this time.

Our trip was nearly a week later than last year's trip, but due to the cold, late spring vegetation and bird migration were at about the same stage. Warblers were in full migration, and we obtained a good list for the day.—FRED J. PIERCE.

Shore Birds at Amana Lake.—On May 17, 1940, I was fortunate to observe some rare and unusual shore birds on Amana Lake in Iowa County, Iowa. (This is the place where the field trip terminated when the Iowa Ornithologists' Union convention was held at Cedar Rapids two years ago.) The water level of the lake was much lower than it has ever been at this time of year. The lake bed was exposed from 10 to 15 feet all the way around the edge of the lake, and even more at one end. Hundreds of shore birds were feeding on this space.

The more common species of sandpipers—Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral, Least, Semipalmated, and Lesser Yellow-legs—were present in large numbers. Other observations included 5 Killdeers, 2 Black-bellied Plovers, 6 Red-backed Sandpipers, 7 Long-billed Dowitchers, 2 Stilt Sandpipers, 6 Sanderlings, many Semipalmated Plovers, about 25 Wilson's Phalaropes, and 3 Red Phalaropes. About 150 Franklin's Gulls were feeding on a plowed field bordering the lake.

DuMont, in his 'Revised List of the Birds of Iowa' (1933), places the Red Phalarope on the hypothetical list. I feel certain regarding my observations of this species as the light was very good and I was on the bank only a few feet from them. My walking along the bank did not disturb them. I should like to know if they have been observed in other parts of Iowa in recent years. The observations of the Red Phalarope, Stilt Sandpiper and Sanderling make the first record of these birds for this locality; and we rarely see Franklin's Gulls in as large numbers.

On May 18, 1940, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Petranek, Miss Myra Willis and I visited the lake. All the species of the preceding day, except both kinds of phalaropes, were observed, but they were in much smaller numbers due to the fact that the water had risen to almost its normal level. This was caused by water from the adjacent dike running into the lake and covering most of the feeding area. We did, however, add a Hudsonian Godwit. I went back again next day, May 19, and observed 13 Marbled Godwits and one Ruddy Turnstone, but practically all the other birds had left. On May 20, 8 Greater Yellow-legs had come in.

Seldom do we experience a large shore bird migration because water is usually high in the spring season; but the low water level of the lake made it an ideal stopping place in May of this year.—LILLIAN SERBOUSEK, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



NEST OF LEAST BITTERN
Photographed by Dr. T. C. Stephens.

Nesting of the Least Bittern in Woodbury County.—The Eastern Least Bittern is listed by DuMont (1933) as "an uncommon migrant, somewhat rare as a breeding bird". He lists breeding records for Clay, Palo Alto and Boone Counties. To my knowledge, the first breeding record for Woodbury County, Iowa, is given below.

On July 20, 1938, Dr. T. C. Stephens and the writer made a bird study trip to New Lake which is an old ox-bow lake in the Missouri River bottoms of western Woodbury County. The lake is shallow and large areas are filled with a dense growth of cat-tails (*Typha angustifolia*). Having seen a Least Bittern on the west side of the lake, we decided to inspect the area. We had a light duck boat, and with difficulty poled it through the tall vegetation. We discovered the nest by flushing the bird, and then after photographing the eggs we began a long vigil awaiting the bird's return. There

wasn't a breath of air down in the cat-tails and temperature was above 100° F. The insects were a constant torment, and to make matters worse the boat leaked so badly it was necessary to bail continually to keep it from filling with water. Finally the bird returned and alighted just above and back of the nest. Gradually it climbed through the cat-tail stems to the nest. Dr. Stephens who was in the front of the boat snapped a picture, but at the same instant the bittern became aware of our presence and flew.

The nest contained five eggs and is shown in the accompanying photograph, which was taken by Dr. Stephens. I took a photograph of Dr. Stephens in our light boat on this trip (see opposite page).—BRUCE F. STILES, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Ruddy Turnstones and Caspian Tern in Western Iowa.—On May 17, 1940, along the sand beach at the north end of Lake Manawa, Pottawattamie County, Iowa, I saw some shore birds that were quite brightly marked. They were unsuspicious and I was able to approach within 30 or 40 feet. They were Ruddy Turnstones, and I saw 4 individuals. I believe they are the first of the species to be recorded for southwestern Iowa.

A single Caspian Tern was on Lake Manawa on June 9, 1940. Its large size, bright red bill, and flight with the bill pointed down, readily distinguished it as this species. It was at the lake all morning, and besides seeing it dive for fish I had a chance to observe it with binoculars at a distance of 60 yards as it rested on a narrow sand-bar.—BRUCE F. STILES, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Bald Eagles at Guttenberg.

—On Sunday, March 10, 1940, 13 members of the Dubuque Bird Club drove to Guttenberg, Clayton County, Iowa, to observe the Bald Eagles which had been reported to us by Harley Lawrence, ranger in charge of the area. It was an interesting sight. We could only estimate the number of Bald Eagles in the immediate vicinity as between 25 and 50. They were sailing overhead, settling and rising from the breaking ice on the Mississippi River, and occupying the taller trees of the island opposite our observation point. Not all the eagles were in sight at one time. The attraction was apparently food in the form of dead fish which had been cast up by the ice, or fish frozen in blocks of ice. Eagles in various stages of maturity were among them. The white tails and heads of the fully matured birds glistened in the sunlight. We had plenty of opportunity to observe them. Near by were many flocks of mergansers—neither disturbed nor fearful.—E. P. HEUSER, Dubuque, Iowa.



DR. T. C. STEPHENS
 Photographed by Bruce F. Stiles.

Saw-whet Owls in Polk County.—While taking the Christmas census on December 24, 1936, Mrs. H. R. Peasley noticed a number of owl pellets in the woods near Camp Dodge in Polk County, but she did not find any owls. On December 28, I went with her to the place. We found one Saw-whet Owl in the hawthorn thicket where she found the pellets, and another Saw-whet near by under a tangle of grape vines grown over a hawthorn tree. They were very tame and we got as near as we liked—about three feet. The first owl was sitting very low, about four feet above ground, and the other was six feet. On December 30, we took Kate LaMar to see the owls and found only one. I was there on January 5, 1937, and saw one owl; on January 23, I found two; on February 16, I found two. Dr. and Mrs. Peasley and Thos. Scott were there during January and February, 1937, and found as many as three at one time. The owls were not seen after February 28.

No Saw-whet Owls appeared at the place during the winter of 1937-'38. They returned, however, during the winter of 1938-'39, and the record is as follows: December 3, 1938, the first owl found; they were present from then on, and as many as nine were found there through the winter; seven were seen on March 2, 1939, by Mrs. Peasley, and nine were seen on March 11, by Kate LaMar.

During the winter of 1939-'40, Mrs. Peasley found the first Saw-whet on November 23, 1939, at the Camp Dodge woods. Two were seen there on December 23, and three the next day. I did not visit the locality during January and February because of illness and bad

weather, and the owls were not observed. On March 15, 1940, two were seen there. Dr. Peasley has a reel of amusing moving pictures of these owls; some of the shots were taken as near as 18 inches. Under the title of 'Some Saw-whet Owls in Central Iowa', Thos. G. Scott wrote about the owls in the 'Wilson Bulletin', Vol. L, 1938, pp. 239-242.—MRS. ROSS J. THORNBURG, Des Moines, Iowa.

Lead Poisoning of Mallards.—According to a report submitted to the Iowa Conservation Commission by Thomas G. Scott (Leader, Iowa Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit), evidences of lead poisoning were found in 123 dead Mallards picked up on January 23, 1940, at Baringer Slough near Ruthven, Iowa. Lead poisoning is indicated by lead or by green stains in the cloaca or around the vent. One other bird was found which showed no signs of lead poisoning but did appear to have been recently shot, since it had a shot wound and internal hemorrhage.

The answer to the question of how many shot are required to kill a Mallard is suggested by the table which accompanies Mr. Scott's report. Nineteen birds (15.5 per cent) had no shot in their gizzards, but did show signs of lead poisoning. Fifty-five, or 44.7 per cent, contained only one shot. This suggests "that few shot are needed for a lethal dose." In fact, Mr. Scott adds the parenthetical statement, "A single No. 5 shot will kill a Mallard duck," but does not indicate the source of this statement. The gizzard of one male contained 22 shot.

About three-fourths of the birds contained food. Mr. Scott suggests that lead poisoning causes a weakening, and finally a paralysis, of the voluntary muscles, so that the bird is unable to use the food he takes in and eventually starves to death. Extreme cold would hasten the death of birds which were in a weakened condition because of lead poisoning.

A summary of Mr. Scott's table on the number of shot found in these Mallards, is as follows:

No. of Shot	No. of Birds	Per Cent
0	19	15.5
1	55	44.7
2	22	17.9
3	12	9.8
4	3	2.4
5	2	1.6
6	4	3.3
9	2	1.6
10	2	1.6
13	1	.8
22	1	.8
Total	123	

MARY E. ROBERTS, West Liberty, Iowa.

Two Good Lists at Ogden.—On two trips in 1940 it was my good fortune to list over 100 species on each day. On May 5, an all-day trip, we listed 102 birds within a radius of 30 miles of Ogden; on May 19 we tried again and finished with a list of 105. Our best finds on May 5 were a flock of 30 Wilson's Phalaropes and 2 flocks of Dowitchers totaling 75, 4 Golden Plovers, 2 Western Willets and 2 Ospreys. Best records on May 19 were several Sanderlings, 4 Buff-breasted Sandpipers, a Hudsonian Godwit, and a number of Red-backed Sandpipers. The Sanderling was a new one for my Life List, and this was my second record for the Buff-breasted Sandpiper in over 20 years of field work. We also listed an Eared Grebe, which was another new one for my Life List. There were few warblers but plenty of shore and water birds.—W. M. ROSENE, Ogden, Iowa.

Bird Records in the Conesville Region.—On February 25, 1940, we saw two Bald Eagles, in immature plumage, near the marsh at Conesville, Iowa.

We saw two Duck Hawks at the Fitch Duck Club near Conesville on May 4, 1940. The first bird was seen chasing sandpipers in the shallow water and mud-flats of the north end of Long Lake; he didn't harm the sandpipers, but merely chased them off the lake. Musgrove and W. C. Thietje (of the University of Iowa Museum) saw this bird at very close range. In the afternoon of the same day a large (female?) Duck Hawk was seen swooping after a flock of Blue-winged Teal. It came very close to both of us and to Mr. Thietje. The teal, instead of trying to fly away from their pursuer, dropped down to the water of a small pond and a ditch near by, within a few feet of us, and stayed there until the hawk left. A Duck Hawk was seen there the next day, again after shore birds.

On May 4 and 5, we observed a number of uncommon shore birds at the Fitch Duck Club. On the 4th we saw 5 Golden Plovers which were feeding on a mud-bar, 8 Dowitchers, 30 Semipalmated Plovers, 4 Hudsonian Godwits (3 males and 1 female), 2 Black-bellied Plovers, and many of the common shore birds. On May 5 we saw one of the male Hudsonian Godwits and a female Wilson's Phalarope. These birds were all seen on the mud-flats or in the shallow water of the upper end of Long Lake. Normally this lake is two or three feet deep, but because of the lack of rainfall during previous months the water was so shallow that even the smallest shore birds could wade in the middle, and large mud-flats were exposed. All these birds were seen in Louisa County.

On May 11, 1940, we saw King Rails, Virginia Rails, Sora Rails, and one Yellow Rail at Conesville, Louisa County. On the same date, Musgrove saw a Florida Gallinule while wading in Swan Lake between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City.

A male Hooded Warbler was found dead at the Fitch Duck Club, near Conesville, on April 13, 1940. We saw two Upland Plovers near Lone Tree, Johnson County, on May 4, 1940. Next day we saw a Mockingbird in an osage orange hedge along a road near Conesville. —JACK W. MUSGROVE, Des Moines, and MARY E. ROBERTS, West Liberty, Iowa.

RECENT BIRD BOOKS

BIRDS OF OREGON, by Ira N. Gabrielson and Stanley G. Jewett (Oregon State College, Corvallis, Ore., 1940; cloth, pp. i-xxx + 1-650, with 1 colored plate, 97 pp. of halftones, 20 maps in the text & folded map in end pocket; price, \$4.25).

This book has an added interest for Iowa readers because the senior author, Ira N. Gabrielson, is a native Iowan, born at Sioux Rapids in 1889. He received his education at the Sioux Rapids high school and at Morningside College, Sioux City, followed by research studies at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory at Lake Okoboji. For several years he was a high school teacher at Marshalltown, and during his Iowa residence he published many important bird articles in the 'Wilson Bulletin'. Taking a position with the U. S. Biological Survey, he went to Oregon in 1918, and his studies of Oregon birds have extended from that year. He is now Chief of the Biological Survey. The book was written entirely by Gabrielson, while Mr. Jewett, whose bird work in Oregon began in 1902, assumed the task of checking records and literature.

In ornithological interest Oregon is one of the richest areas of the entire West, but until fairly recent years not a great deal of material on its bird life had been published. This book is the first comprehensive work covering the entire state, and it therefore fills a gap among the state bird books. A work of this kind was much needed in Oregon.

Produced by ornithologists of distinction, it is an authoritative volume that might well grace the book-shelves of every serious bird student.

Oregon is a large state with unusually varied topographical and faunal conditions. That bird students there have opportunities not available to us in the middle west is very apparent as we proceed through the book. The chapter on life zones is replete with photographs showing typical scenery among the lakes, mountains and canyons of Oregon. The early chapters sketch the bird's place in a general way—activities, coloration, song, nest-building, care of the young, migration, economic status, etc. The history of Oregon ornithology, from the first records of Lewis and Clark in 1805-06 up to the present time, is outlined in a very interesting chapter.

The annotated list of the birds of Oregon takes up the greater part of the book. For each species there is a description of plumage coloration including that of the young bird, notes on size, nest, eggs and distribution, followed by an account of its habits and records for the state. The bird photographs, which are well scattered through the book, depict many species and are of the highest quality. A great many are from the cameras of Wm. L. Finley and H. T. Bohlman, whose photography of bird life is well known. An adequate bibliography and index close this very worth-while book. Paper, printing and binding are excellent.—F. J. P.

We like to record the travels of our members in 'Iowa Bird Life', but we are unable to do so unless the Editor receives the necessary information. From a few "travel notes" on hand we record the following: Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Buzby enjoyed a trip to New Orleans and the South in the late winter. Dr. George Hendrickson attended the National Wildlife Conference at Washington, D. C., in March. During March M. L. Jones accompanied a group of Iowa State College students who visited various places in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas on a geology tour. Walter Rosen recently returned from a visit with his son, Walter Jr., in Alabama.

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Halftone cuts are expensive and we could not have many illustrations in 'Iowa Bird Life' were it not for the generosity of our members. We are particularly grateful to Bruce F. Stiles, who has furnished a number of fine halftones during the past year. Others have also helped, and we appreciate it. We are always willing to print illustrations with bird articles if the cost of engraving is assumed by the authors. It is also desirable to have likenesses of our members and local bird club groups preserved in permanent form in our magazine. A good many photographs of prominent members have been published during the years, and we hope to add to the list in the future.

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